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Spicy Recipes

You are what you eat

Try out these delicious recipes gleaned from across the vast subcontinent – India, using the fabled spices of the East.

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In the following pages you will find some of my favourite recipes gleaned from across the Indian subcontinent. As is common with other Asian cuisine, the key to a scrumptious meal is fresh ingredients and a sense of proportion.

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Key Ingredients

The collection of recipes in this group uses mostly Indian spices amongst other things, for I strongly feel that "Spice is the essence of Life". Apart from a declared tendency to use all the available spices, I espouse the cause of Red Hot Chilies, almost in all my preparations, except in coffee. They make your roof tingle and the capsaicin (the key ingredient) peps you up.

Chilies add colour to the dish other than being hot. Ground red chilies are used to flavour meat and gravies whilst green chilies season chutneys and fried items. Chilies can be hot regardless of their colour. Capsicum or the green bell pepper, always milder in taste, adds texture.

Garam masala (literally *hot spice in Hindi*) is akin to allspice powder. It is a mixture of ground spices useful to season almost any Indian dish. It is best to get the spices fresh and roast them before grinding. Will keep for about 3 months in an air-tight jar. Spices can bring the best out of any ingredient and the aroma can whip up a healthy appetite in the entire vicinity. The ancient Indians believed that a good food should appeal to all the senses. It is all a matter of proportion – the right texture, colour, aroma and taste ...

Contrary to popular belief, "spicy" food does not result in Ulcers. Ginger, for example, is used in eastern medicine as a "cure-all" for various ailments including Headaches to rejuvenation of the body. In the folk lore, Ginger is praised as a restorative and as an aphrodisiac. This pungent tasting root aids digestion. This root ingredient, a close "relative" of Chinese ginseng, aids digestion. Similarly, Turmeric is used widely as a preservative, taste enhancer (in lieu of MSG to avoid the "Chinese Restaurant syndrome") and a food additive. This ingredient figures prominently in the traditional eastern medicine.

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Spiced Beef with Mushroom

Requirements:

Beef 500 gm, cut into bite sized pieces
button mushroom 200 gm,
small onions 10
peas 100 gm
black pepper, freshly ground, 2 tbs
chili powder 1 tbs
garlic, 30 flakes, crushed
Tomato 6
clove 4
bay leaf 3
cinnamon 4
Chinese parsley (Cilantro) 1 cup
salt 2 teaspoon
green onion 2
green chili 4
ginger 1 inch piece

Method :

Grind 5 onions with about 15 flakes of garlic, pepper, salt and green chilies, add chili powder to this. Marinate beef in this for over 2 hours in normal temperature. In a wok, add oil and fry the remaining garlic and onion, add the spices and after a few minutes, add the beef with its sauce, cover the wok. Grind the tomatoes and after some time, add it to the beef. Pour little oil into another wok, add onions, chopped green onions, ground ginger and fry. Add quartered mushroom into this wok and fry till mushroom reduces in volume by little. Meanwhile the first wok, with beef must have cooked for at least 20 minutes, and the sauce must have reduced to half. Add the contents of the second wok and heat through for about 3 minutes. Garnish with Chinese parsley. Serve hot with Nan or Bread.

Serves 4.

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Chicken Fry



Ingredients:

*Chicken 500 gms
Chilly powder 5 tablespoon
Cornflour 3 tablespoon
Maida flour 2 tablespoon
Allspice powder 2 tablespoon
Garlic paste 2 tablespoon
Red colour powder, 2 teaspoons
Chopped Chinese parsley, 4tablespoon
Salt,as required
Oil,200 ml*

Method:

Pressure cook the chicken for 10 minutes and set aside the stock. Mix all the above items,except the oil,with the chicken and marinate for atleast 30 minutes.Heat the oil in a wok,and deep fry the chicken pieces and garnish it with chopped Chinese parsley.

Serves 4.

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Spicy Crab

Ingredients:

Crab (medium size) 500 gm
Black Pepper 3 teaspoon
Garlic 2 flakes
Fenugreek 2 teaspoon
Onion big size 2
cloves 3
cinnamon 1 piece
Tomatoes 4
Coconut milk 500 ml
Coriander leaves,(Chinese parsley,Celentra all refer to this grand fragrant herb) chopped 2 tablespoons
Lemon 1
salt,as required
chili powder 3 teaspoon
oil

Method:

Wash the crabs thoroughly and set aside.Powder the fenugreek seeds and grind the pepper with garlic to a paste.Grind the tomatoes and extract the juice.Slice the onions.Pour oil in a wok,and after the oil is hot,add cloves,cinnamon and fenugreek powder.Now add garlic paste and stir for 2 minutes.Add onions and fry till golden brown.Add tomato extract and the crabs.Mix well and allow it to boil for a few seconds. Pour the coconut milk,salt and let the crab cook in it,till the gravy dries out.Garnish with coriander leaves and halves of lemon.

Serves 4.

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Chicken Fried Noodles



Requirements:

- chicken pieces, about 400 gms
- cruciferous vegetable, 150 gms (broccoli or cauliflower)
- Celery, 1
- Green onion, 1
- Bell pepper, 1
- Noodles, 400 gms
- Green chilies, 5
- Eggs, 2
- Freshly ground pepper, 2 tsp.,
- Ginger, 1 sq. inch
- Garlic, 10 flakes, crushed
- Star aniseed, 1, ground
- Carrot, cut lengthwise, 150 gms
- vegetable oil, 60 ml
- soy sauce, 30 ml
- chicken broth 150 ml
- Cilantro, 1 bunch
- chili powder 2 tsp.
- Chicken soup cubes, 3
- Corn starch, 50 gm

Note :

Most of the ingredients mentioned above contain plenty of Vitamins, minerals, phyto-chemicals and anti-oxidants which not only lower your chances of cancer, but also promote a sense of well being, especially with all those Red-hot chilies inducing a flush....

Believe me, when I am down with Cold and feel like running my head under a speeding train, I prepare this concoction which leaves me refreshed, (phew..) the next day.

Method:

Cut the chicken to bite-size pieces, coat them with a little corn flour, and half of soy sauce, mix with chili powder and aniseed powder. In a non-stick wok, add 1 tblspn of oil and pour the eggs and cook them under low fire. When it comes to eggs and prawns, you need to cook them under low fire to preserve their texture or they get "rubbery". Sprinkle the scrambled eggs with pepper and remove them to a plate. Add more oil to the hot wok. Add the crushed garlic and crushed ginger to the oil. Add the chopped green onions, chilies and chicken to the wok, stirring all the while. After a couple of minutes, reduce the heat so that the chicken cooks in its juice. Later add the florets of cruciferous vegetables and stir fry them for about 3 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare Noodles as advised and set aside. Turn up the heat in your wok. Add the broth, spiced with crushed soup cubes and soy sauce. Add the remaining corn starch to add the "glaze" and stir with chopped celery and scrambled eggs. Lastly mix them with the prepared noodles. Garnish with cilantro and serve hot.

Serves 4.

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If I have succeeded in whetting your appetite for what might well turn out to be a rich culinary expedition, my mission of spreading the rich tradition of Indian spices would be complete.

Feel free to come back for more !

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